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Rules and Precepts of the Jesuit Missions of Northwestern New Spain by Charles Polzer

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foundation of tribal government which flourished after the war, and support for tribal culture and religion. Failures include bicultural education and, most seriously for Collier, the deep demoralization the Navajo experienced because of stock reduction.

In ways this study is limited in scope and perspective. Clearly, the major concern is the administrative side of the Indian-White relationship. Discussion of the Navajo experience is restricted to the arena of council politics. This in itself can be very misleading of Navajo opinion because the composition of the council included a significant faction, sometimes in control, who were opposed to Navajo traditionalism and who, although a small minority of the Navajo population, skillfully manipulated Navajo dissatisfaction over government conservation policies to win elections and push assimilationist positions which rank and file Navajo would never accept. Before the Navajo experience under the New Deal can be assessed, we will have to examine the role of women and the effect that stock reduction had on status determination. Also, the discussion of causation is not always clear. For example, we are told that resentment of stock reduction was the reason for the defeat of the Wheeler-Howard referendum, yet Parman's treatment of the role of J. C. Morgan, the pre-eminent assimilationist leader, coupled with the tabulation of district voting statistics on the referendum, suggest that without Morgan's skillful propaganda campaign the referendum vote might have gone the other way. Another example is the Navajo response to livestock reduction, which is explained in one place in materialist terms and in another in cultural terms.

These criticisms aside, *The Navajos and the New Deal* is a pioneering work of historical scholarship. Hopefully, it will stimulate studies of the New Deal period on other reservations, studies which will eventually allow us to make a reasoned assessment of the Collier period.

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Rules and Precepts of the Jesuit Missions of Northwestern New Spain. By Charles Polzer. (Tucson: The University of Arizona Press, 1976. x + 141 pp., 2 maps, 4 illustrations, selected bibliography, index. \$4.50 paper, \$8.50 cloth.)

Father Polzer's book belongs to a series — The Documentary Relations of the Southwest — which he describes at the outset as a "reliable source of information unimpaired by interpretive synthesis." For all that, Polzer's long interpretive essay seriously distorts and impairs the fine documents he is introducing.

He portrays the Jesuit missions of seventeenth and eighteenth century Northwestern New Spain as evangelizing efforts which evolved into highly regulated and complex outputs of frontier development, institutions of Church and State. By examining the regulations, he states that we can observe

the increasing complexity of the missions. Of course rules are not history, he admits, but these documents accurately represent the historical realities because the Jesuits obeyed their rules. He assures us that, because of their vows of obedience, the Jesuits did what the rules say.

He then summarizes the documents chronologically, from 1610 to 1763, indicating that whereas the rules established a system which gathered, baptized, instructed, and acculturated the Indians with gentleness, they tended in time toward picayune stipulations (e.g., types of clothing, amounts of food, number of mules in packtrains) which stifled and confused the missionaries. The early rules created an administration based on consultation, continuity, expertise, and flexibility; the later rules became harsh and restrictive, preventing the Jesuits from working with the authority and enthusiasm of their initial efforts. Polzer knows there were problems with the missions — particularly in the area of Church-State tensions — but the ordinances only served to hurt the cause.

The rules and precepts themselves present quite a different picture, one of early mission dependence on the Spanish military and forced Indian attendance at mission services under pain of flogging. They indicate vividly that through time the Jesuits became lax in their obedience to the early codes. Many failed to keep records of the Indian languages, as instructed; others failed even to learn the languages. Some complained about each other to the laity, causing a severe divisiveness within the religious community. The rules hint that Jesuits were avoiding attendance at required meetings and lapsing from their spiritual exercises.

By 1715 the Jesuit authorities were forced to increase the stringency of their rules because their missionaries so flagrantly broke the former regulations. They were carrying weapons, wearing finery, and aiding the Spanish in obtaining and holding Indian slaves, all in disregard of established law. The new precepts claim that Jesuits were ignoring their preaching duties, ceasing to visit the sick, and working their Indian laborers so hard and long that the Indians' own crops went untended.

The rules which Polzer trivializes in his interpretation make solid sense in the documented context of progressive abuses. The evidence clearly witnesses the increased greed as well as complexity of Jesuit life. Many of the fathers were living in luxury, participating in revelry, and making a profit from the missions for themselves and their families. If they were so free in breaking their vows of poverty, why should we believe that they kept their vows of obedience, especially when the documents prove the contrary? One wonders how closely Polzer read the rules and precepts, or how closely he expected us to read them. He has done them a disservice with his interpretation.

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